

Challenge Standards for Student Success

Visual and Performing Arts





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Introduction

The standards for visual and performing arts provide a guideline for organizing instruction, developing curriculum, and implementing assessment in dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts. These standards describe the content that all students are to learn and include examples of the types of work they are to complete to show what they have learned. The standards are not intended to describe a full visual and performing arts curriculum; rather, they reflect the essentials that proficient students should know and be able to do in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts by the end of each specified grade span. They are intended to serve as models for parents, teachers, and the community to use in shaping their own arts standards.

A comprehensive visual and performing arts program designed to help all students meet these standards will offer systematic, explicit instruction and skill development that includes artistic perception, creative expression, historical and cultural understanding, aesthetic valuing, and connecting, relating, and applying the arts to what is learned in other disciplines and to careers. Provisions should be made to ensure that all students have full access to the total visual and performing arts curriculum.

These arts standards have been developed as part of State Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin's Challenge Initiative. The initiative asks school districts to set high content and performance standards, stating clearly and publicly what each student in the district should know and be able to do at the end of each year in each subject area. Schools are challenged to hold themselves accountable for results by reporting precisely how well their students are achieving and how many students are meeting the school district's standards. District arts standards are scheduled to be adopted in 1998, with baseline assessment in the arts to be conducted in 1999.

The visual and performing arts standards are a product of collaboration among representatives of school districts participating in the Challenge Initiative; curriculum specialists, artists, and teachers in each of the arts,

kindergarten through university; and California Department of Education staff. A small working group began the development of the standards in 1995 and produced a first draft in December of that year. Additional meetings were held in 1996 and 1997 to receive suggestions and to refine the standards. The content is based on the *Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* (1996) and the *National Standards for Arts Education: What Every Young American Should Know and Be Able to Do in the Arts* (1994), developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, and published by the Music Educators National Conference, Reston, Virginia.

The development of these standards was coordinated by the Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Division of the California Department of Education. If you have questions about these standards, contact the Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment Division at (916) 657-3011.

Format of the Standards

Five visual and performing arts standards are addressed for each of the four arts disciplines and at all grade levels. Included for each of the four arts disciplines—dance, music, theatre, and visual arts—are descriptions of the standards specific to the art form. At the beginning of each discipline, the five standards are listed and followed by a descriptor of what students will do or learn in meeting the standards.

Each set of standards contains grade-span benchmarks, statements of students' growing capacities in the arts, and tasks that might be used to give some evidence of student achievement. The dance and music standards define grade-span benchmarks for kindergarten, grades one and two, grades three through five, grades six through eight, and grades nine through twelve. The theatre and visual arts standards define grade-span benchmarks for kindergarten through grade three, grades four and five, grades six through eight, and grades nine through twelve. An indication of what might be expected of students at each grade level is included. All standards are written to apply to all students. In the future, standards will be developed for grades six through eight and nine through twelve for students who take a series of advanced-level courses in a particular art form.

Upon examining the standards in any form, one begins to see overlaps and points of connection among the benchmarks, statements of student capacities, and tasks. The overlaps and connections are to be expected because the standards are intrinsically interrelated. When working with a partner or small group in creating a dance sequence, for example, the student is demonstrating proficiency in creative expression (Standard 2), is applying his or her skills and perceptions (Standard 1), and is reflecting on knowledge of the work of other dancers (Standard 3). In the same task, the student is also participating in the critique process as he or she evaluates the dance sequence (Standard 4), is demonstrating skills in working with others, and is perhaps incorporating themes from other disciplines (Standard 5).

The Visual and Performing Arts Challenge Standards

Standard 1: Artistic Perception: Processing, analyzing, and responding to sensory information through the language and skills unique to the arts

Standard 2: Creative Expression: Creating, performing, and participating in the arts

Standard 3: Historical and Cultural Context: Understanding historical contributions and cultural dimensions of the arts

Standard 4: Aesthetic Valuing: Responding to, analyzing, and making judgments about works in the arts

Standard 5: Connections, Relations, Applications: Connecting and applying what is learned in each art form to learning in other art forms, subject areas, and careers